

**DEER HERD UNIT MANAGEMENT PLAN**  
**Deer Herd Unit # 3**  
**(Ogden)**  
**April 2006**

**BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

**Weber, Box Elder, Cache, and Morgan counties** - Boundary begins at Hyrum and SR-101; east on SR-101 to the Ant Flat Road (at Hardware Ranch); south on this road to SR-39; west on SR-39 to SR-167 (Trappers Loop Road); south on SR-167 to I-84; west on I-84 to I-15; north on I-15 to Exit 364 and U.S.-91; northeast on US-91 to SR-101; east on SR-101 to Hyrum.

**LAND OWNERSHIP**

**RANGE AREA AND APPROXIMATE OWNERSHIP\***

	Yearlong range		Summer Range		Winter Range	
Ownership	Area (acres)	%	Area (acres)	%	Area (acres)	%
Forest Service	0	--	19859	10%	12011	9%
Bureau of Land Management	0	--	0	0%	76	<1%
Utah State Institutional Trust Lands	0	--	8216	5%	0	0%
Native American Trust Lands	0	--	0	0%	0	0%
Private	0	--	139478	70%	112589	80%
Department of Defense	0	--	0	0%	5	<1%
USFWS Refuge	0	--	0	0%	0	0%
National Parks	0	--	0	0%	0	0%
Utah State Parks	0	--	0	0%	20	<1%
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources	0	--	30516	15%	15206	11%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>198069</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>139,907</b>	<b>100%</b>

**UNIT MANAGEMENT GOALS**

Manage for a population of healthy animals capable of providing a broad range of recreational opportunities, including hunting and viewing. Balance deer herd impacts on human needs, such as private property rights, agricultural crops and local economies. Maintain the population at a level that is within the long-term capability of the available habitat to support.

## **POPULATION MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES**

- < Target Winter Herd Size - Achieve a modeled target population size of 11,000 wintering deer. This is a reduction of both long-term and short-term objectives from the objective established in 2003, due to permanent loss of winter range within the unit.
- < Herd Composition – Maintain a minimum 3-year average postseason buck to doe ratio of a minimum of 15-20 bucks per 100 does.

### **Unit 3**

1994-2005 Objective:	15,000
2003 Objective:	12,000
2006-2011 Objective:	11,000
Change since 2003:	-1,000 (due to permanent loss of winter range)

## **POPULATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

### **Monitoring**

- < Population Size - Utilizing harvest data, postseason and spring classifications and mortality estimates, a computer model has been developed to estimate winter population size.
- < Buck Age Structure - Monitor age class structure of the buck population through the use of checking stations, postseason classification, uniform harvest surveys and field bag checks.
- < Harvest - The primary means of monitoring harvest will be through the statewide uniform harvest survey. Achieve the target population size by use of antlerless harvest using a variety of harvest methods and seasons. Buck harvest strategies will be developed through the RAC and Wildlife Board process to achieve management objectives for buck:doe ratios.

### **Limiting Factors (May prevent achieving management objectives)**

- < Crop Depredation - Take all steps necessary to minimize depredation as prescribed by state law and DWR policy.
- < Habitat - Winter and summer forage conditions, public land range availability, winter habitat development, and landowner acceptance will determine herd size. Excessive habitat utilization will be addressed.
- < Predation - Refer to DWR predator management policy.
  - Assess need for control by species, geographic area and season of year.
  - Seek assistance from Wildlife Services when deer populations are depressed and where there is a reasonable chance of gaining some relief through a predator control effort. Concentrate Wildlife Services control efforts during and immediately prior to the fawning period.
  - As necessary, recommend cougar harvest to benefit deer while maintaining the cougar as a valued resource in its own right.
- < Highway Mortality - Cooperate with the Utah Dept. Of Transportation in construction of highway fences, passage structures and warning signs.

- < Illegal Harvest - Should illegal kill become an identified and significant source of mortality attempt to develop specific preventive measures within the context of an Action Plan developed in cooperation with the Law Enforcement Section.

### **HABITAT MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES**

- < Maintain and/or enhance forage production through direct range improvements throughout the unit on winter range to achieve population management objectives.
- < Work with private and federal agencies to maintain and protect critical and existing winter range from future losses.
- < Provide improved habitat security and escapement opportunities for deer.
- < Condition of deer winter range on Unit 3, as indicated by DWR range trend surveys.

Year	Mean DCI score for Unit	Classification	Unit-specific DCI score range: Poor	Unit-specific DCI score range: Fair	Unit-specific DCI score range: Good
1996	51	Poor to Fair	35 – 49	50 – 64	65 – 79
2001	54	Fair			

### **HABITAT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

- < Continue to monitor the permanent range trend studies located throughout the winter range.
- < Work cooperatively to utilize grazing, prescribed burning and other recognized vegetative manipulation techniques to enhance deer forage quantity and quality.
- < Utilize antlerless deer harvest to improve or protect forage conditions if and when vegetative declines are attributed to deer over utilization.
- < Cooperate with and provide input to land management planning efforts dealing with management decisions affecting habitat security, quality and quantity.

### **PERMANENT RANGE TREND SUMMARIES**

#### **Unit 3, Ogden**

There are a total of 13 range trend sites in this unit. Of these, 1 was dropped from the 1996 range trend inventory due to poor site placement. The remaining 12 sites are all located on big game winter range. Deer populations throughout the unit have increased since the 1992-93 die-off; however, fawn losses are common throughout the unit even during mild winters. Range conditions are generally described as having a low browse component with a downward trend in forb density. Because of fire, weedy species have replaced desirable plants throughout much of the unit. In addition, winter range development has severely impacted the number of deer that can winter on the unit. In March, 2000 the Ogden deer management plan objective was lowered to 12,000 to reflect winter range loss. To summarize, the unit can be divided into 3 distinct wintering areas. While all sites show different utilization and vegetal structure, the trends are reasonably similar throughout the unit.

Ogden, Box Elder County portion

- \$ Eight established sites between Perry and Mantua Reservoir
- \$ Trend is down on grasses and forbs, stable for browse.
- \$ There is a predominance of undesirable species (cheat grass, dyer's woad) present on all sites

Ogden, Ogden Valley portion

- \$ Three established sites east of Huntsville
- \$ Fire and development have dramatically affected the number of deer this portion of the unit can winter
- \$ The browse component varied from eliminated to slightly up, however, preferred browse species were down. On all sites, forb densities were down with an increase in undesirable grasses.

Ogden, Cache County portion

- \$ There is one established site near Hardware Ranch
- \$ Grasses and forbs are exhibiting a downward trend, while the browse component is stable.

**Duration of Plan**

This unit management plan was approved by the Wildlife Board on \_\_\_\_\_ and will be in effect for five years from that date, or until amended.